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The Bedouin of al-Qasr idealize the life of the pastoralist. It is a dominant theme in their culture. Gardening and arboriculture are perceived by the Bedouins as involving long hours of work, anxiety over waiting for profits, and complex market operations. They understand the logic and operation of the sheep market. Sheep are a store of value, a source of security, and a medium of exchange. In a good year of rain, a man can reap a good crop of barley, and buy more sheep against the inevitable bad year to come. While most Bedouins are, in one way or another, involved with the modern cash economy which ties al-Qasr to Marsa Matruh, the Bedouins who go into the production of cash crops on a large scale are those who can afford the risk of failure and who can survive the meager profits of the initial stage. These are the men who can adjust their world view from that of the pastoralist to that of the entrepreneur. There are only a few of these men in al-Qasr but they dominate the economy. Through them, most of the Bedouins of al-Qasr are linked to the national economy.

Land and Economy

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The period between 1960 and 1964 was one of significant economic change in al-Qasr. Dependence upon farming increased while pastoralist activities became less important. In the past, none of the Bedouins now living in al-Qasr were "nomads;" even my oldest informants had moved only once or twice to

428 the father's property. The egalitarian spirit of the Bedouin
596 inheritance rule functions to maintain the unity of the family, and, at another level of social complexity, the structural continuity of the corporate group. Ideally, the surviving sons will keep intact their father's estate, his land and animals, and will work it as a unit. And this is generally
596 the case in al-Qasr. On the other hand, there is also the
594 implicit assumption in the structural principle of the
*613 Bedouin segmentary lineage system that each individual will
•183 eventually establish a unit of his own, separate from but interrelated with, the main household. As a result, there
596 usually develops some division of property and labor among
593 surviving brothers. Whether or not this division is formally agreed upon, and, whether or not it is assigned by the father or the eldest son is largely arbitrary. In some cases, the father makes such a decision before his death and prepares his sons for it. The father's concern is that good relations be maintained between his sons after his death. Just as the father mediates conflict between his sons during his life, so he hopes to maintain peace between them after his death. The Bedouins say that a father should be fair when dealing with his sons, and that he should never favor one over the other.

428 Inheritance is determined through the patrilineal
*[613] lineage principle. The Bedouins of al-Qasr claim that they

*613 formal leadership. Ideologically, group solidarity at this level is explained solely in terms of patrilineality; in fact, local contiguity and explicit contractual ties are just as important. When we add to this the principle of
*613 582 cognation in the form of the Bedouin preferred form of marriage, parallel-cousin marriage, the resulting structure is what Emrys Peters (1965) has called "the corporate group par excellence." But, as we shall see later, father's
● [183] brother's daughter-marriage is more of a cultural ideal than it is a social reality in al-Qasr.

*613 554 571 The interplay of kinship, residence and contract ties defines a corporate structure of authority and also informs an external system of authority relations including all who claim descent from 'Ali 'Aqar, son of the mythological Sa'ada. The feeling of "corporateness," and the concomitant structural demands upon the individual changes as the scope of political action widens. This degree of corporate feeling is related to the structural differentiation between what has been interpreted as "domestic relations based on kinship and descent" and "the field of political relations" (Fortes 1953:26). In
121 *613 554 571 this study, I maintain that both the internal and the external systems of relations are political" since power and legitimate authority are exercized in both. Therefore, rather than use the terms "domestic" and "political," I shall refer to the internal system of political relations and the external system

593 family is a dominant-subjective one. But the rights and duties of the father have no legal sanctions. His authority grows out of the moral and mutual dependence, the common interests and value, which hold the family together. The 593 authority relations learned in the family become the norms •183 of behavior to be applied by the individual in a wider-scale 867 network of social relations. The son learns the discipline-respect relationship which is the model of behavior between generations. The subjective role which the daughter plays in the father-daughter relationship prepares her for the role of wife.

Marriage and Kinship Relations

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The parallel-cousin, the father's brother's daughter, is the preferred mate in Bedouin marriage. Parallel-cousin marriage in al-Qasr is more of an ideal than a practice. In fact, parallel-cousin marriage is not practical in the case where social order depends upon the integration of a larger and clearly segmented population. Endogamy of this kind in this type of society works against survival in a double-edged way: economic security through cooperation with a larger group is discouraged, and political security through 171 coalition is undermined. In the Middle East, as elsewhere, 582 cross-cousin marriage is the normative practice which functions "as a counterweight to the tendency of unilineal descent group-

582 and, the individual has been socially conditioned to prefer
171 his father's brother's daughter.

582 All of these explanations are as plausible as they
183 are obvious. They are, in fact, the same explanations which the Bedouins themselves offer for their marriage ideal. But one cannot help noticing that the explanations offered actually concern an ideal in Bedouin social behavior, and not a practice. Theories showing the logic of parallel-cousin marriage are placed along side the fact that this type of marriage is statistically atypical.

582 If, as Islamic Law decrees, the daughter did inherit
428 some share of her father's property, then parallel-cousin
[691] marriage as an attempt to keep land in the tertiary group would be logical. But we know that usually the sons inherit all of the father's property, Islamic Law to the contrary (Levy 1957:245-246). In this case, parallel-cousin marriage can only be seen as an ideal which functions side by side with the other ideal of a girl's right to inherit.

582 Barth (1954), and Murphy and Kasdan (1959) have
171 stressed the political advantages which attach to parallel-cousin marriage in the context of factional struggle. The general idea is that political differentiation between collateral branches of the lineage structure is intensified and political autonomy enhanced by the practice of turning affinal bonds inward. Parallel-cousin marriage then has the opposite

582 "parallel cousin" (i.e. bint 'amm) is perfectly interchangeable
114 with the term "parallel-cousin once removed" (i.e. bint ibn
196 'amm, "daughter of the father's brother's son"). After I
[124] had familiarized myself with the genealogies of al-Qasr, I began to realize that many of my informants were using the term bint 'amm to refer to the parallel-cousin once, twice, or even thrice removed. When I pointed this out to one of the Bedouins, he replied: "So what, there is nothing forbidden about this type of marriage." Table 5 shows that this is
582 indeed the case. There are a number of cultural ideals
•183 which influence the practice of marriage in al-Qasr: endo-
182 gamy is encouraged because it cements and intensifies corporate ties; exogamy is desired because it widens the web of kinship; men prefer younger women to older women and may utilize their cousin-right privilege to realize this preference.

582 The Bedouins of al-Qasr define the bint 'amm over a
829 wide range. One informant said that "all of the girls of the Awlad 'Ali tribe are my bint 'amm, we are all one." Another said to me, that "any girl of the 'Ali Ahmar is a man's bint 'amm." And yet another informed me that "a man of the Qinaishat tribe will reserve his daughter for me before he will give her to an outsider." Ideologically, a bint 'amm seemed to be anything except the father's brother's daughter. This is quite convenient for the Bedouins because an ideological concept can be placed anywhere along the scale of actuality

decision-making which allocates values in society. This process orders the internal and external political relations of corporation members. The corporate office which acts to regulate internal affairs, and to represent the group in external affairs is a unique status in al-Qasr having only one incumbent at a time. In Bedouin society, then, the corporation is to be considered distinct from the corporate sole (Smith 1966).

The corporate group, although based on common interests and values, is not an integrated body simply in terms of consensus. Coercion also maintains corporate relationships. Consensus derives from the code of the group (Nadel 1951: 161), a set of common ideals. But in practice, the group must exert coercive pressures, sanctions, against individual behavior which threatens the welfare of the collectivity. Coercion may be seen as a necessary condition for what Durkheim called "mechanical solidarity." In al-Qasr, as in most societies, the desire for conformity to norms predicates coercive measures; coercion and consensus derive from the same cause, i.e., the requirement of some degree of integration. The corporate group and its authority structure is the mechanism which insures, through political means, the necessary degree of integration for the survival of al-Qasr society. In order to understand the phenomenon of social change occurring in al-Qasr, politics as an aspect of culture

*613 segment. He acts in concert with other 'awaaqil (plural of
554 'aqila) of the tertiary segments of his secondary group when
571 lineage matters call for decision-making at this level.
*613 Tertiary segments are replicate groups descended from one
571 ancestor, they operate with a common ideology pursuant of
•183 common interests and goals. As we shall see, this common
675 ideology is expressed in a kind of code, or contract, which
all members of the group swear to uphold and abide by according
to the principle of blood responsibility. Tertiary codes in
[181] al-Qasr are a reflection and an affirmation of a wider system
of values and norms which bind the Bedouins of the Western
Desert together into a political system. This wider normative
[671] system is expressed in the customary legal system of the
Bedouins known as 'awaiyid Awlad 'Ali ("the customs of the
Awlad 'Ali tribe").

*613 The primary duty attached to the office of 'aqila is
578 the regulation of conflict. It is worth noting here that
571 conflict regulation is not equivalent to conflict resolution.
554 The latter process carries with it the intimation that the
causes of conflict have been treated and resolved, that conflict
has been eliminated. Nothing could be further from the truth
in a segmentary society where the various segments actually
constitute conflict groups; consequently, conflict between
groups or individuals who represent groups may be contained
but never forgotten. Conflict is an ongoing process among

6. every member of the tribe who submits a complaint without first consulting his 'aqila, (i.e. who goes to the government before the 'aqila),

7. every member of the tribe shall back the members of his bait against an opponent without right,

8. every member of the tribe who has proved against him the showing of sympathy toward another tribe knowing that this tribe is antagonistic to his own tribe,

9. every member of the tribe who has proved against him that he helped a relative in payment or in a quarrel against his brother.

we signed this document and declare that these customs are valid from the date of today and everyone who disobeys them pays a dhabiiha ("lamb") and 10 L.E. without any objection if any of the items of the above items is proven against him.

Date: August 8, 1953
The 'awaaqil (signatures or stamps):
Abd al-Ruwaf (Bait Firjani)
Hussain 'Umar (Bait 'Umar)
Shi'ath Abd al-Hadi (deceased, Bait Braik)
'Atiya 'Umran (Bait Kailani)
Khalid Idris (Bait Muhammad)

In the rawaabit, or contract, just noted the term "tribe" refers to the secondary segment ('aiela). Murray (1935:315n) has also pointed to an instance of the Bedouins' use, in a formal document, of the word qabiila ("tribe") when reference to "some smaller division, such as 'eila is clearly meant."

Through the rawaabit norms are expressed and action is oriented with respect to them. If it is otherwise, sanctions may be brought to bear to insure conformity to norms. The minimal sanction which the 'aqila may impose is the dhabiiha

process of conflict regulation is ritually sanctioned and the political order sacralized in a public way at the conclusion of litigation when the parties involved and the 'aqila read the Fatiha (the first sura of the Quran). For the Bedouins, the 'awaiyid is the enactment of the word of God, and the man who follows the 'awaiyid follows the commandments of God. One 'aqila speaking of the final authority which directs Bedouin society said this:

> God knows all things. God made the world and gave man a brain with which to think. Therefore, he gave man two choices: the good, and the bad. If a man follows the good, he does not steal, kill, or lie. God gave us Muhammad the Messenger, and he taught the ignorant to follow the word of God. You are an educated man, and so you must choose the good path and follow it. I do not read but I follow the Quran.

It follows, then, that "the good man" represents an important Bedouin cultural ideal which is legitimated by reference to the sacred. The practice of this ideal leads to "the good society." Another 'aqila, in reply to my question concerning the definition of a "good man," answered:

> A good man should follow God, and through this he will be a perfect man because such a man could make no mistakes. You could find no better person than this. The good man fasts, prays, takes the pilgrimage, and helps the poor. He avoids stealing and lying; these are the most important things to avoid . . . All men aim to do good. Some men think that they are doing good, but they cannot tell good from bad: this is the origin of badness . . . A man aims to do good so that the Arabs will thank him for it. The Arabs (i.e. the man's fellow Bedouins) will say that he is doing good and that he is following the good path.

According to this 'aqila, the "good man" is the "good Muslim" who observes the pillars of Islam (fasting, praying, making the pilgrimage, and alms-giving). Also, the "good man" does not steal or lie, and this leads, importantly enough, to social accord.

In light of the preceding discussion of authority and law, we can now offer a description of the Bedouin judicial process in action. Southall (1956:121-151) has drawn the distinction between internal and external delicts on the bases of kinds of sanctions rendered, and whether or not chiefly authority mediates conflict. Such a distinction can be only partially applied in the case of the Bedouins of the Western Desert. The kind of sanctions operating in the internal political system do differ from those applied in the external political system, though not to the same degree which is true of Southall's Alurland. On the other hand, since Bedouin society, lacking political centralization, cannot be characterized as a segmentary state with distinct spheres of authority at successive levels of the lineage structure, the intervention or non-intervention of chiefly adjudication and decision-making cannot serve as a basis for differentiating political action. Rather, the lone political office of the 'aqila involves itself in all arbitration which cannot be successfully concluded by the mechanism of familial authority. There are just two exceptions which apply to this latter statement:

554 concerns magic. Each August there is a celebration in honor
571 of al-Qasr's local saint. At these celebrations, the darwish
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789 performs his special skills such as putting a red-hot iron
796 to his tongue, or standing on a skin drum held high by his two assistants. No member of the "status group" attends these affairs because the darwish and his magic "belong totally to the old way of life." This is a restriction on social intercourse. It may also be a rejection of the saint's sacred power, or reluctance on the part of the "status group" to
554 share authority. The ideology which the "status group" in
571 al-Qasr has developed embodies attitudes of cooperation and
• 183 patience with induced programs of change. These attitudes are invoked in varying degrees corresponding to motives of economic gain, desire for power, and altruistic concern. But the result is a "status group" mood which may be described as one of disdain for the old way of life. Ideology and discontent in al-Qasr are mainly evident among the members of the "status group."

554 The pool from which the members of the "status group"
556 are recruited consists of the "status honor" possessors of
571 three lineages (two Sa'adi and one Marabit). These have been,
* [613] traditionally and presently, the wealthiest and most influential in al-Qasr. Wealth in al-Qasr is defined in terms of three things: sheep, land, and olives. Olives are becoming the measure of wealth in the modern al-Qasr: sheep are the tradi-

634 who reach the age of military service. He is also supposed to report
554 the presence of any fugitive or criminal in his district and report
659 crimes occurring in that district and which involve members of the tribal segment he represents.

634 The first two duties of the omda to the government do not involve
554 any conflict of interest. Unlike the rural areas where sons are con-
657 sidered a very important economic asset to their parents, and therefore,
562 there is a general resentment of military service which takes the sons
701 away and deprives the parents of their important work around the fields,
178 Awlad Ali look at military service as

1 On the basis of one percent of the yearly yield.

an opportunity to have their sons go to the city, obtain guaranteed payment, and escape the hardship of nomadic existence. Economic activities
[233] in the area do not require the cooperation of a large number of individuals, and most of the grazing of animals is done either by a paid shepherd or by one of the grown-up sons. Although there still exists an
[183] ideology which values having many sons, yet with the cessation of hostilities between the tribal segments, their presence in the area has lost its
[464] value. Many of the younger generation are seeking jobs with the government projects in the area or in the city. Neither one is easy to find. Joining the army is increasingly considered as an easy alternative.

634 The omda's function which seems to involve some conflicting loyalties
554 is that of reporting crimes involving members of his tribal segment. But
659 even this does not pose a serious problem as it might seem. Almost all
674 minor crimes committed against property or persons as well as all civil disputes are left to be handled by the tribal proceedings. The duties of the omda are limited to reporting the cases of murder and serious assault

586 626 593 562 779 divorce only under specific circumstances in the absence of which the husband can force her to live with him. Following the Koraanic rules, Awlad Ali give men the right to dissolve the marriage at will and without any necessary justification; however, they differentiate between cases where divorce is justified and those in which it is not. In a case of justifiable divorce, the husband can take back the mahr and possibly all other marriage expenses. In the case of unjustifiable divorce, the husband forfeits his right to regain the mahr. Divorce is justified whenever one or more of the husband's rights are violated by the wife or members of her family. Not all degrees of violation are considered as justification for divorce, however. Only intolerable violations can be considered as such. In deciding whether or not an act constitutes an 183 intolerable violation, Awlad Ali judge it against the standard of the reasonable man, the customary man, and what he would have tolerated in a similar situation.

586 183 554 What constitutes reasonable behavior does not only vary according to the situation and the manner in which the actions are taken, but also with the relative position in the social structure of the parties involved and their initial relations to one another. In the case of divorce, what constitutes grounds for justifiable divorce in one case may not be sufficient grounds for justifiable divorce in another. In one of 586 183 554 the cases I witnessed during the year of study, a man who divorced his wife because of her insistence that he buy her meat from the market 511 144 every day of the week, was forced to forfeit his right to redeem the mahr on the basis that the wife's actions had not established a basis for justifiable divorce. In the negotiations that followed, the position of the husband, as well as that of the family of the wife, were discussed.

586 183 554 511 The husband had a big herd by the standards of the tribe (600 sheep and goats). In addition, he also cultivated a large stretch of the fig land in the coastal area and was making good money. In other words, the husband could afford the standard of living the wife demanded. The other question that was discussed was the actions of the wife herself. She was the daughter of one of the wealthiest members of the same tribe as her husband; and according to the people who knew her, she was used to meat every day of the week. In other cases, similar demands by the wife to have a certain kind of food or to be clothed in certain kinds of material were considered as an intolerable situation, and the husband was justified in his divorcing her and had the right to retrieve his mahr. This was obvious in the case of one of my informants whose wife insisted that every time he went to Alexandria, he bring her silk material for a dress. Since the husband could not afford to meet her demands, her insistence was considered as grounds for the husband. The assessment of reasonableness on the part of the husband in his divorce action and therefore his right to the mahr paid is frequently influenced by the relative position of the husband and the wife's guardian in the social structure. An influential man who marries his daughter to a poor relative or nephew rarely has to return the mahr.

586 562 Although women among Awlad Ali are not given the same legal right of divorcing the husband by pronouncing the "dismissal formula," they are given the right of certain customary procedures which in practice give them equal facilities for dissolving the marriage. This is known as the right of the woman to "throw herself." This means that the woman takes all her clothes and sometimes her children and goes to the dwelling of

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562 This apparently is not a typical case, nor is Fatma by any means representative of a typical tribal women. It is a case of a marginal woman who had revolted against the tribal definition of a female role. She violated the customary ways of her society and claimed her share of her father's inheritance; and by doing this, she forfeited her right to protection by her brothers. She was able to do this because of her marginality which enabled her to draw upon sources of protection outside the tribal pattern, the police. It is interesting to note here that by doing so, she was not totally eliminated or ostracized from her society; rather, her role was redefined as that of a man, and she was treated as such.

000 the role of the victim in initiating the act of the offender. In the
684 case of the adulterous wife (Case #7), the intention of the husband to
682 kill the wife's lover was clear from the evidence; yet, the husband's
672 kin group never attempted to take refuge, and the victim's group was
eager to settle the case with the least amount of publicity. On the
682 other hand, killing in circumstances that offend the tribal standards
672 of chivalry, like killing from ambush or during the night, are the most
183 difficult to solve and pose the greatest chance for retaliation.

682 Although the traditional amount of compensation is not determined
672 by the actual intentions of the killer, but rather by assumed intentions
[673] as deducted from the type of weapon used in causing death, yet, the final amount paid is usually determined by such intention. The actual intention works as the basis for bargaining between the victim's kin and the kin of the killer. Kin of the victim of an intentional killing are less likely to agree to any reduction of the amount, and with the threat of retaliation or revenge present, the killer's kin are bargaining from a weaker point. This is not the case in unintentional killings or where the victim's behavior instigated the reaction of the killer. In such cases, the victim's group is more willing to accept a lesser amount of compensation, and the killer's group, while not in a good bargaining position, at least are not under the threat of revenge. And since they do not resort to the right of refuge, their daily activities are not disrupted. In this case, they could sustain the bargaining activities for a relatively longer period of time. Also, there is usually a strong
[626] pressure on the victim's group to accept reduced compensation in the case of unintentional killing from the rest of the tribal members. If

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

save the Italians much labour and danger. The policy had very limited success, for in practice the Patriots recruited from every tribe and every section. Bedouin sentiments about kinship and its obligations worked both ways. If it was a duty to avenge a slain kinsman it was no less a duty to protect and aid a living kinsman, and the sense of kin and its compelling influence in conduct, all that is meant by '*asabiya* in Bedouin values, are the life and the soul of the Romany world.

It took the Italians a long time to realize that the Bedouin mind was not all of one piece but a Joseph's coat of conflicting interests. These interests excluded each other as the social situation evoked one loyalty to the detriment of another and it was, therefore, only in terms of their social structure that the apparent inconsistencies of Bedouin behaviour could be understood. Consequently the Italians were for ever suffering disappointments and accused the Bedouin, with increasing resentment and bitterness as the struggle continued, of disloyalty and treachery. Among the collaborationists, the *mtalyanin*, the Italianized, as the Patriots called them, there was every degree of participation from passivity, the refraining from taking an active part in the resistance, to full co-operation with the Italian army as spies, guides, informers, and administrative officials; but even those guilty of the worst complicity could, especially when some personal tie was involved, do the guerrillas a good turn. Many poor Bedouin near the towns joined the Italian forces as one kind or other of irregulars, police, and friendlies, and as labourers and camelmen, and it was found that these, while drawing Italian pay and rations, did not hesitate to assist the Patriots when an opportunity offered itself. Desertions to the enemy with full equipment were frequent. Italian rifles and ammunition and even pay were often handed over to the guerrillas. After an engagement the ground was left strewn with live ammunition for the guerrillas to glean. Many reported fights between the Patriots and the submitted population were undoubtedly inventions to cover gifts of ammunition, supplied by the Italians, from the Italian-sponsored irregulars to the Patriot bands. These native battalions constituted, in fact, 'a sort of supply depot of men, arms, and ammunition for the Sanusi formations'.[1] Information about Italian troop move-

[1] 'La pulizia del Gebel Cirenaico', by 'Gadria', *L'Oltremare*, Dec. 1930.

4: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) 1970 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Cyrenaica

Fusion of names appears in another context and for similar reasons. Not only are lineal descendants given the name of deceased ancestors, but a man may be given the name of any deceased agnate of his tertiary section. Usually, this is only done when a man passes on property to another who is not his direct heir. Commonly, this occurs when an agnate is also a mother's brother, as often happens as a result of parallel cousin marriage, and this mother's brother has no sons of his own. If he has a sister's son, who is also his paternal nephew, he is likely to pass on his wealth to this nephew. A father, the Bedouin insist, ought to perform three duties for his sons: attend to their circumcision, and their education in the Koran, and provide bride-wealth when they marry. All fathers attend to the circumcision of all their sons; few provide for the Koranic education of any of their sons; most bear the burden of marrying off at least one of their sons. The performance of the latter duty is what makes the continuance of the deceased's name an obligation, and whoever performs this duty must have his name perpetuated in one male offspring of the union which was brought about with his wealth. Wealth need not take the form of bride-wealth; it can be a legacy willed by a father, maternal uncle of the kind described above, or any other agnate who has died without male issue. Conversely, if a man dies without leaving any property, even his sons might not perpetuate his name, and eventually it will drop out of the genealogy.[10] There are instances of men inheriting the wealth of a number of agnates, using each parcel of wealth to make a new marriage and naming the sons of the various unions after the several dead who had left wealth. The example given below is taken from the genealogy of the Dawwas section of the Magharba tribe. What happened here was that the two lines stemming from Faraj and Sha'aban, after proliferating normally, became extinct. As this happened, Ibrahim, the son of Miftah, began to inherit wealth to which he was not a direct heir; and

[10] To avoid confusion, it ought to be made clear that this is not ghost marriage. As I understand ghost marriages from Evans-Pritchard's (1951) account, two main conditions must be satisfied: (i) that there should be inherited wealth to make a marriage, and (ii) that the wealth remaining after the ghost marriage has been made is inherited by the ghost children only. In Cyrenaica, wealth thus inherited becomes part of a man's total wealth and is not reserved for a ghost marriage and its issue.

in position immediately anyone else appears at the entrance to the tent.[11] Women cook, but they do not serve the meal to males, nor are they responsible for the distribution of meat among them. Parts of an animal are carefully specified, and the various portions distributed at a meal carry with them a great deal of significance. A host can honour, flatter, disappoint or even insult his guest, depending on the precise distribution of meat he adopts. Designated portions should go to certain kinsmen if they are present, but this still leaves a wide margin of choice, and a host can use this choice as part of the many means at his disposal for directing his relationships with other men. A political link can be forged or another snapped by the distribution of portions of meat at the commensal meal.

The Bedouin Ideal Type of Family as a Unit of Production

This account of the division of labour is far from inclusive of all the tasks carried out. The details given are only barely sufficient to provide some indication of the necessary composition of a family. Referring again to the Bedouin sentiments about the matter, it is now possible to give it some numerical precision. The number of females should be a minimum of about three, including a mother, a teen-age daughter and a child of about eight years. Males should number about six: a father, relieved of most chores to act as director; a son in his middle to late twenties, to plough; a second son, in his early to middle twenties, to herd the camels; a third, in his late teens to early twenties, to shepherd the sheep; a fourth, middle to late teens, to look after the goats; and a younger son to fetch, carry and run errands about the camp. The family of the ordinary Bedouin, they say, shows this sex and age distribution, although they recognise that a politically ambitious man with the wealth to match his aspirations would require more of both sexes — particularly women, since the burden of entertainment increases rapidly with a man's climb to power and fame.

Clearly, the basis of Bedouin sentiment concerning family structure is its approximation to an ideal production unit. Some families display the features of this ideal, but even they enjoy the productive benefits of this composition for a very limited period only. The family, as described above, can only be an ephemeral unit, since the age structure constantly changes, women are removed by marriage, men move away and death affects it at any point at any time. The Bedouin family is a fiction in the sense that it can be said to have a characteristic composition. The mistake they make is to conceive of it as a particular kinship structure related to production. The substance of what has been referred to as a fiction is that, if viewed as a productive unit, it bears close consistency with reality. Freed of the need to examine it in terms of specifically limited kinship relationships, and no longer anchored to the inhabitants of a single tent, the distribution of people according to sex and

[11] This is the general rule. In practice, the use of the divider can indicate an intimacy or distance in relationships, most subtly.

Cases

age depicted in their notion of a family is meaningful. It follows that, since this unit will not be clustered in one tent, but distributed over several, each small community must be so constituted that links people can use to claim the services of others must exist, and that, since claims can be made against various sorts of kinship relationships, each small camp will have predictable kin links. It follows, further, that since age, sex and number of people are significant, a small camp will have a characteristic demographic structure; each tent in a camp will display developmental changes, and particular tents may be shifted from one camp to another, but if a livelihood is to be gained in this semi-desert environment supporting its mixed pastoral-cum-agricultural economy, then at any given time the small camp must have certain fixed features in its composition. The elementary family is subject to far too many vicissitudes to exist on its own. It now remains to demonstrate this general argument by examining the details of one of these small camps.

A Particular Camp Viewed in Detail

The camp was one of 12 which constitute a minimal tribal section. In genealogical terms its male members were linked through an ancestor five ascending generations from living males of about 20 years of age. Usually, in summer, camps of this sort move to the vicinity of a large watering point; in winter, this larger community breaks up into a number of smaller ones as man and animals move off further south to the pastures. The total living population of the tribal section to which this particular camp belonged was 524.

Linked patrilineally, its male members were also linked in a plurality of other consanguineal ways. Primarily, this plurality was brought about by parallel-cousin marriage. The incidence of this form of marriage for males of this group was 48 per cent[12] of the gross total of 234, derived from their marriages over three generations; that is, the generation of males entering into marriage, and the generation which has begun to die out are included with the generation of middle-aged males. This means that practically every male is related to others in a number of ways, and it is necessary to point this out now because the details to be given presently will show only the more immediate, but not all, existing connections. Plurality of links, moreover, is not the only consequence. Parallel-cousin marriage is a transmuting agent, creating a diversity of links. Each and every link carries with it specific modes of behaviour, which in turn means that each individual has a wide variety of different claims he can press on his co-residents. Marriage connections also exist with other sections of the same tribe. Their proportion is 28 per cent of the total. Demographically, it

[12] As a matter of interest, the figure for marriage to the father's brother's daughter is 50 per cent of the figure for parallel-cousin marriage in general, but the consequences of these are beyond the scope of the present discussion.